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rich in gold makes the question still more important. Colonel Holdich closes his book with the statement that it is only the official indisposition to advance beyond the Indian frontier which "bars the way to the establishment of a line of commercial traffic both along the Brahmaputra and northeastwards to China."

LURENA WILSON TOWER.

Philadelphia.

Jackson, A. V. Williams. *Persia: Past and Present.* Pp. xxx, 471. Price, \$4.00, net. New York: Macmillan Co., 1906.

The appearance of "*Persia: Past and Present*," marks an important addition to knowledge, by one of the first living scholars. Its author is A. V. Williams Jackson, professor of Indo-Iranian languages, and sometime adjunct professor of the English language and literature in Columbia University. Prepared thus by years of the closest application and preparation, as well as by an earlier tour of India and a study of the Parsees there, gifted with unusual powers of appreciation and observation, and possessed of untiring energy and a critical judgment, Professor Jackson has added more to our knowledge of this once important land than any scholar since Sir Henry Rawlinson. His most important contribution is indeed directly in the footsteps of this greatest of modern Persian scholars, for he has achieved the feat not only of being the first to follow Rawlinson in examining the all but inaccessible inscriptions of King Darius on the great Behistun Rock, but even of photographing the most important parts, thus throwing new light on some of the mooted passages in the cuneiform text studied only once before, fifty years earlier, by Rawlinson. To do this was indeed one of the objects of his trip, the general purpose of which was a serious study and examination of all of the more important of the ancient monuments of the early empires of the Medes and Persians. A further object was to perfect his study of the ancient religion of Persia, in the treatment of which his earlier volume, "*Zoroaster*," has already taken first rank. By persistent inquiry, examination and research Professor Jackson has accomplished a further service in identifying many hitherto unknown or unrecognized locations of ancient fire temples. Finally, his study of the beliefs, traditions, and life of the modern Zoroastrians at Isfahan, Yezd, and Teheran, and his interpretation of the historic significance of their manners and customs is the most complete that has yet been made; indeed, in all his observations of present-day Persia, its life, its beliefs and its traditions, Professor Jackson has always before him the search for survivals of the ancient religion.

The volume is the story of three months of hard work, during which the author examined with care all the more important monuments, scattered over a land of distances, in which travel is chiefly by caravan, the difficulties and discomforts of which can be appreciated only by those who have experienced them. It is a book of travel and of research, and is of interest and value alike to the scholar and the traveler,—an unusual combination, for few travelers are scholars, and few scholars are travelers.

The illustrations, of which there are 200, are remarkable both for excellence and choice. Many subjects rarely chosen are added to those ordinarily presented, so that one is able to form a complete picture of the country and its life to-day and of the grandeur of the monuments of its great past. Copious footnotes establish the sources of special information and enable the student to consult all the authorities when views are at variance. His voluminous bibliography and references show the author's faithful study of all of his predecessors, of the religious books of the East, and of the records of historians and travelers, from Zoroaster and Herodotus through the Arab writers to the present. A carefully prepared index and an excellent map complete the volume.

In a land where the attention of the traveler must ever be upon questions of transportation or of vexatious and petty details, and where the population is as ignorant of its great past and as sparse and illiterate as in Persia, only a man of the erudition and, it may be added, of the good disposition of Professor Jackson could have accomplished so much in so brief a time. Versed in all the lore of the Avesta and familiar with European and Oriental writings,—literary, religious and achæological,—and with the spirit of the true scholar, he was ever alert to identify and to interpret the past in the light of the present. Every object and occurrence took on meaning. By hard travel and incessant labor he succeeded in seeing a great deal of the country, observing Persian life with the keen interest which the enthusiasm of the student produces and which years of preparation tend to cultivate. In order to guard against wrong impressions and generalizing from insufficient data, he was careful to include all the most important points of interest and upon his return took three years in the preparation of his book, in order to subject his observations to the test of comparison with the history of the country from the earliest times.

The style of the book is what would be expected from an English scholar. The archæological descriptions are painstaking, clear and convincing. The narrative chapters are graphic and vivid, yet simple. Not merely is the interest sustained but the reader is carried along by the author's appreciation and enthusiasm for his subject, in which at times he reaches a style almost poetic. With excellent powers of description and characterization, Professor Jackson's references and interpretations also are of the greatest historical and critical value.

His additions to the body of knowledge of his subject are great and important because they deal with the most important and most perplexing of the monuments and because of the light that he throws on the past by his close observation and questioning in regard to present customs and traditions. His constructive power and his critical judgment make his numerous suggestions of identification for ancient sites and for further research of the greatest value.

The book includes no consideration of the political history of the present or future, but opens with a brief historical summary, and a resumé of Persia's religious history which has played an important part and which to-day, in the form of Babism, menaces the supremacy of Mohammedanism

in Persia. The grandeur of her ancient monuments and the beauty and decorative design of much of her later work are made to live again for us. Her contributions to comparative philology, history and religion, through the discovery of the Zoroastrian scriptures and the deciphering of the cuneiform inscriptions are all reviewed, and the study of the Pahlavi or Mid-Persian texts, inscriptions, coins and gems, and their results for general historic and linguistic science are touched upon. The recognized title of Persian literature to a place among the great literatures of the world is made clear as also the influence of Persia upon England and the other European languages. The author is also alive to possibilities for American commerce.

We finish the book with a feeling of regret that the author's promised book on his Turkestan experiences cannot immediately be opened.

DORA KEEN

Philadelphia.

Meakin, Annette M. B. *Russia: Travels and Studies.* Pp. xx, 450. Price, \$4.00. London: Hurst and Blackett. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1906.

Of the many books which have appeared lately on Russian subjects, the majority deal either exclusively or particularly with political questions. This book is of an entirely different character. It is of no less interest, however, than these other works—and it should be greatly appreciated by those readers who wish to learn something of a country which is passing through a most serious economic and political crisis.

The title—*Travels and Studies*—explains exactly what we are to find in Miss Meakin's book. The book is in the first place the compilation of notes made by one who has traveled, not a single time, but several times, through all the important cities and districts of Russia. The writer knew the language of the country—and in traveling she talks with the official, the priest or the peasant—and she studies not only the past history of each place, but also its present condition and importance.

The reader is taken through all the important cities of Russia, cities typical of the many different geographical and ethnical elements which go to make up the great empire. The author gives in the most acceptable manner the interesting story of each place as she visits its historic monuments. The important part played by each in the development of a great nation is pointed out. These facts of history, so instructive to one who wishes to understand the present problems of Russia, are thus given in a form much more accessible to the ordinary reader than they would be in a mere chronological account.

Kieff, Russia's first capital, where christianity was accepted by the Russians and the old idols thrown into the river—Moscow, still the commercial capital—Novgorod, the only city republic—St. Petersburg, the window looking toward the west which Peter the Great built in with such difficulty—these are not the only places studied. One is taken deeper, into small provincial cities with their peculiar customs, and into peasant villages. Miss Meakin has spent much time in the peasant villages and homes. The land question is